

In the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

Please cancel claims 2 and 7.

1. (Currently Amended) A plant expression cassette, which comprises a 5' cauliflower mosaic virus 35S promoter operably linked to a nucleic acid encoding a glutamine synthetase protein and a 3' NOS terminator sequence, wherein said nucleic acid encodes glutamine synthetase from gymnosperm *Pinus sylvestris* having the sequence of SEQ ID NO: 3, and expression of said cassette in a plant increases nitrogen metabolism in said plant.

2-7. (Canceled)

8. (Currently Amended) A vector comprising the expression cassette of claim 2 1.

9. (Previously Presented) The vector of claim 8 which is an *Agrobacterium* binary vector.

10. (Original) The vector of claim 9, wherein the vector is pBIN19.

11. (Currently Amended) The vector of claim 10, which further comprises the a neomycin phosphotransferase II coding sequence.

12. (Currently Amended) A method of producing a transformed Poplar plant by transforming *in vitro* said a plant with the expression cassette of claim ~~2~~ 1.

13-15. (Canceled)

16. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 12, wherein the plant is the hybrid *Populus tremula* X *P. alba*.

17. (Canceled)

18. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 12, wherein the transforming is by *Agrobacterium tumefaciens* mediated transformation.

19. (Canceled)

20. (Previously Presented) A transgenic plant produced by the method of claim 18.

21. (Previously Presented) An isolated reproductive unit from the transgenic plant of claim 20, said unit comprising a nucleic acid encoding heterologous glutamine synthetase.

22. (Previously Presented) A cell from the transgenic plant of claim 20, wherein said cell comprises a nucleic acid encoding heterologous glutamine synthetase.

23-28. (Canceled)

29. (Previously Presented) The transgenic plant of claim 20, which is a hybrid of *Populus tremula* X *Populus alba*.

30-40. (Canceled)